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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
Washington

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Fruit

FOREIGN NEWS ON FRUIT

July 25, 1931

SUMMARY OF EUROPEAN FRUIT CROP PROSPECTS

Present conditions indicate an improvement in this season's fruit crops as compared with last year, according to the "Fruit Notes" of the Empire Marketing Board. Apples, although not heavy, promise good yields generally on the Continent, but prospects for the United Kingdom are only moderate. Cider fruit prospects are definitely better than last year. Pears appear to be very good on the Continent with a moderate crop indicated for the United Kingdom. Plums will be a generally short crop in Europe this year. Cherries on the whole are giving good crops. Berry fruits are generally good, particularly strawberries, which are abundant both on the Continent and in the United Kingdom. Peaches are a good crop and apricots fairly good. The following table is a summary of the information that has been received by the Board to July 8.

Country	Apples <u>a/</u>	Pears <u>a/</u>	Plums and gages	Apricots	Peaches
England.....	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	-	-
France.....	(Cider) Good :(Dessert) Good:	(Cider) Good :(Dessert) Good:	Light	Medium	Good
Algeria.....	-	-	Very good	-	-
Belgium.....	Good	Good	Light	-	Very good
Netherlands....	Fairly good	Fairly good	Light	-	Fair to good <u>b/</u>
Germany.....	(Cider) Good :(Dessert) Good:	Very good	Medium	Good	Good
Italy.....	Moderate	Good	Good	Good	Good
" (Tyrol)....	Light	Very good	-	-	-
Austria.....	Medium	Good	Medium	Medium	-
Hungary.....	Good	Good	Medium	Light	-
Spain.....	-	-	-	Fairly good	-
Switzerland....	Good	Good	Medium	Light	Light
Czechoslovakia:	Fairly good	Good	Light	Medium	Medium
Yugoslavia....	Good	Good	Light	Good	Good
Bulgaria.....	Good	Good	-	-	-
Norway.....	Good	Good	Good	-	-
	Cherries	Strawberries	Black Currants	Red Currants	Gooseberries
England.....	Fair to good	Very good	Variable <u>c/</u>	G. to V. Good	Good to V. Good
France.....	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Belgium.....	Good	Very good	Good	Good	Good
Netherlands....	Medium	Good	Good	Good	Light
Germany.....	Good	Very good	Good	Good	Good
Italy.....	Good	Good	-	-	-
Austria.....	Good	-	Good	Good	-
Switzerland....	Very good	Good	-	-	-
Czechoslovakia:	Medium	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly good	Fairly good
Hungary.....	Good	-	-	-	-
Yugoslavia....	Good	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria.....	Good	-	-	-	-

a/ Condition subject to revision as later information becomes available. b/ (Under glass) Good. (Outdoor) Fair. c/ Very good in Kent.

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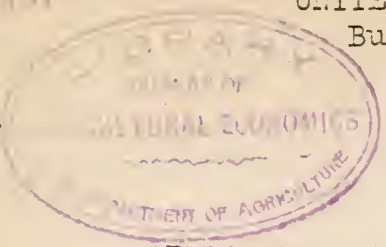
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FOREIGN NEWS ON FRUIT

October 1, 1931

APPLE AND PEAR PROSPECTS ON THE CONTINENT IN MID-SEPTEMBER

All reports continue to indicate an abundant supply of both apples and pears on the Continent this year, with the crops of record or near-record proportions in Switzerland and the southern half of Germany, according to a report from Agricultural Attaché L. V. Steere, at Berlin. Markets in all of Northern and Central Europe, including the Dutch markets, promise to be heavily loaded with domestic fruit until much later in the season than is usually the case. The outlet for American fruit will be limited while this condition exists.

Germany

Notwithstanding the continual cool and rainy weather during most of August, crop prospects for both apples and pears have improved in Germany during August and early September. Reports from practically all sources now give generally more recognition to the fact that production of both fruits in Germany this year is very abundant. The crop will be particularly good in Central and Southern Germany, which are the most important surplus districts, but it is also indicated to be more abundant than previously thought in most other sections. There can be little doubt that this year's yield of both fruits will be one of the largest since the war.

The quality of the crop, which promised to be unusually good, has suffered as a result of the cool, wet weather in recent weeks, and reports now indicate that both apples and pears will be only of average or slightly above average quality. The exceptionally heavy setting of fruit hindered growth during July, but a certain amount of drop which occurred during that month, coupled with subsequent rainy weather, resulted in improvement of size after that date. Lack of sunshine, however, will undoubtedly be reflected in lowered quality.

Reports from different important producing districts in Germany are as follows: The Lake Constance area is now expected to have nearly a full crop of apples and pears, and the quality will be good, with a large proportion of fruit consisting of table qualities. Württemberg reports that table apples will be quite abundant and the fruit well developed as a result of wet weather, though somewhat sour because of lack of sunshine. The pear crop in Württemberg will be very large. In the Neckar Valley section, the apple

and pear crops are reported excellent for both early and late varieties. A considerable share of the fruit will be of table quality. The Rhine-Wupper district will not have record crops of apples and pears, but the apple production will be good. Pears vary somewhat. The Sieg district of the Rhine reports an abundant crop of both apples and pears, with qualities good. Fruit crops in Thuringia are very heavy, possibly heavier than in any other part of Germany, with apples promising an especially good crop. Both autumn and late varieties are very abundant. The Altes Land region near Hamburg, which is an important district, will also contribute heavily toward German fruit supplies this year. The apple crop is indicated to be from good to very good, according to variety, although the quality will be somewhat reduced by scab. Late varieties will be abundant, early apples somewhat less so. The pear crop in this section is good.

The outlook for late plums in Germany is unfavorable. Good yields are expected only in Schleswig-Holstein, around Hamburg, and in Hannover and Braunschweig; most other districts have a poor crop, some of them very poor.

### Switzerland

This year's apple crop in Switzerland is a record production and the quantity of table fruit is correspondingly large. According to official statistics of September 12, the commercial crop of early table apples is estimated at 2,160 carloads of 10,000 kgs, as compared with only 240 harvested last year, and the previous high figure of 1,950 in 1929. The commercial crop of late table apples is placed at 6,420 carloads, compared with 830 last year and 6,200 in 1929. Estimates of the commercial crop of cider apples are equally large, with the output placed at 6,920 carloads against 747 last year and 6,050 produced in 1929. The cider pear crop (table pears are not important) will also be very abundant, early and late sorts together being estimated at 8,440 carloads against 559 last year, but the total is slightly below the high figure of 9,470 in 1929. The pear crop is enormous in eastern Switzerland, but somewhat smaller in the central cantons.

Private reports indicate that an apple crop of excellent export quality has been produced, and that only in a few districts was there enough damage from hail to make fruit unsaleable for table purposes. It is also stated that all important varieties are plentiful.

As a result of the abundance of fruit on the market, prices in Switzerland are extremely low, and great difficulty in moving the crop is reported, both with respect to exports and home sales. In order to assist in the movement of the crop, the Swiss government is reported to have introduced relief measures to be administered by the Public Alcohol Administration, in the form of export premiums of Frs. 50-100 per car on inspected shipments and a reduction of 50% in freight rates. The farm organizations are making every effort to bring about unusually careful sorting of table fruit this year, because of the heavy crop and keen competition to be faced on export markets.

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October 19, 1931

FOREIGN NEWS ON FRUIT

THE DECIDUOUS FRUIT SITUATION IN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

In Western Cape Province, which is the principal area for deciduous fruit production in South Africa, conditions are more favorable for a large crop than they have been for the past five years, according to a report received by the Foreign Agricultural Service from C. C. Taylor, Agricultural Attache at Pretoria. The trees are blooming but it is too soon to receive estimates from growers as to production and export prospects. The Perishable Products Export Control Board reports that moisture and temperature conditions are unusually encouraging, and in a general way it is possible to predict that the export crops of apricots, peaches, plums, pears, and grapes will be from 10 to 15 per cent greater than in 1929-30. Total exports in that year amounted to 39,297 shipping tons of 40 cubic feet, or 2,503,283 boxes. The total shipments of deciduous fruit for 1930-31 amounted to 1,894,780 boxes on June 5, which was practically the end of the season. Therefore, an increase of 10 to 15 per cent over the 1929-30 shipments is equivalent to 13 to 20 per cent more than the 1930-31 total.

Mealie Bug infestation, which is reported to be severe in the vicinity of Worcester, is the only adverse factor in the outlook situation. Pears and grapes are the fruits most affected. In some cases, grapes are being fumigated, but this is too expensive for general practice, so efforts are being made to find a better method for controlling the infestation.

Exports

Exports of deciduous fruits have shown a steady growth in previous years, as may be seen from the table on the following page, and growers in the Pearl and Wellington areas near Cape Town are enthusiastic over the monthly direct steamship service recently established between Union ports and Canada. The success of the introductory shipment of fresh fruit to Canada last season is expected to be repeated on a larger scale when the new season begins in December. Exporters are encouraged in this by the preferential customs treatment offered them by this country. The Deciduous Exchange has appointed a Canadian representative who will undertake to advise the Exchange office in South Africa with regard to supply and demand conditions for various fruits throughout the season.

In recent years grapes, pears, peaches, and plums have made up more than 90 per cent of deciduous fruit exports. The fruit is shipped in boxes 12 inches wide by 18 inches long with a depth of about 5 inches. The depth varies, however, pears being shipped in larger boxes. Until the past few years the boxes have run 70 to a ton, but recently they have averaged about 65 per ton, depending largely upon the proportion of pears in the shipments.

SOUTH AFRICA: Exports of deciduous fruits a/, 1898-99 to 1930-31

Season	Exports	
	Packages	Volume
	Number	Tons of 40 cubic feet
1898-99.....	10,817	155
1899-1900.....	17,336	248
1900-01.....	17,265	247
1901-02.....	14,992	214
1902-03.....	21,968	314
1903-04.....	34,723	496
1904-05.....	23,832	340
1905-06.....	59,866	855
1906-07.....	82,355	1,177
1907-08.....	172,922	2,470
1908-09.....	140,916	2,013
1909-10.....	180,672	2,581
1910-11.....	198,423	2,835
1911-12.....	271,253	3,846
1912-13.....	197,959	2,828
1913-14.....	451,633	6,452
1914-15.....	198,417	2,835
1915-16.....	246,016	3,515
1916-17.....	91,783	1,311
1917-18.....	Nil	Nil
1918-19.....	50,461	721
1919-20.....	260,575	3,723
1920-21.....	458,836	6,555
1921-22.....	787,925	11,256
1922-23.....	1,012,628	14,466
1923-24.....	1,001,132	14,445
1924-25.....	1,526,264	21,804
1925-26.....	1,547,643	22,109
1926-27.....	1,536,610	21,947
1927-28.....	1,951,056	28,009
1928-29.....	1,543,193	23,312
1929-30.....	2,503,283	39,297
1930-31 <u>b/</u> .....	1,894,780	-

a/ Pineapple excluded. b/ Preliminary.

### Changes in marketing policy

In addition to a vigorous campaign for new market outlets for wines and grape juice, there have been changes in the marketing policy for fresh fruits. The South African Cooperative Deciduous Exchange has appointed a new overseas representative to take the place of Overseas Farmers as official distributor for the exchange. He will allocate fruit not assigned by growers to specific overseas firms, although Overseas Farmers may be designated by growers as their distributing agency on their own responsibility. Attempts have been made to organize a new cooperative exchange, but meetings of the members have usually resulted in votes of confidence for the existing organization.

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FOREIGN NEWS ON FRUIT

November 23, 1931

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THE DRIED FRUIT SITUATION IN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The estimated aggregate production of dried fruit in the Union of South Africa from the seven fruit crops which supply the fruit used for drying purposes is now placed at 11,550,000 pounds for the 1930-31 season, according to Agricultural Attache C. C. Taylor at Pretoria. This is considerably larger than the April forecast of 8,800,000 pounds but smaller than the September estimate of 12,500,000 pounds. The latest official figures published were for 1928-29 which place the total production at 8,290,000 pounds as compared with 6,314,000 pounds in 1927-28, and 8,424,000 pounds in 1926-27.

The 1930-31 aggregate total, even at the reduced estimate now reported, is unusually large. It is made up as follows:

Apricots.....	3,200,000	pounds
Sultanas.....	3,200,000	"
Raisins.....	4,000,000	"
Prunes.....	300,000	"
Apples.....	200,000	"
Peaches.....	400,000	"
Pears.....	250,000	"
Total.....	11,550,000	"

The earlier estimates of dried apricot production for 1930-31 were too large, because the large carry-over from the 1929-30 crop had not been taken into full consideration. Dried prune production in 1930-31 was smaller than usual, although the final estimate of production is much larger than originally anticipated. The final estimate for dried pears is also much larger than those made earlier in the season. The present estimates for sultanas and raisins are twice as large as those first reported, but the estimate for dried apples has been reduced to less than half the amount earlier expected. This reduction is probably the result of the favorable export market for fresh apples during the past season. The only estimate unchanged is that for peaches. The manager of the South African Cooperative Dried Fruit Company is of the opinion, however, that the 1930-31 estimate for dried peaches will eventually be revised upward.

Exports

With the exception of raisins nearly all of the dried fruit available for export from the 1930-31 crop has been shipped, the season having ended much earlier than usual this year. The estimate of exports for 1931 as given in the following table, can, therefore, be accepted as reasonably

accurate. The figures for sultanas and raisins, however, include 535,000 pounds and 815,000 pounds, respectively, carried over from the 1929-30 crop. There will be practically no carry-over from the 1930-31 crop.

SOUTH AFRICA: Exports of dried fruit, 1928 to 1930, with  
estimates for 1931

Fruit	1928	1929	1930	1931
	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
Apricots.....	2,487,910	3,442,098	3,943,534	2,838,700
Sultanas.....	2,762,494	1,232,202	1,356,182	2,549,677
Raisins.....	2,244,562	1,555,681	1,013,324	3,734,073
Prunes.....	525	605,128	2,307,590	12,000
Apples.....	47,200	22,960	72,916	70,000
Peaches.....	247,540	383,200	1,259,685	300,000
Pears.....	87,635	175	304,325	100,000
Total.....	7,877,866	7,241,444	10,257,556	9,604,450

Consumption

Estimates of consumption of dried fruit in South Africa, based on the opinions of various factors in the trade, are given below. Of these it is probable that the figure for dried peaches is too small, since it is known that dried peaches are sold as the standard dried fruit in all the country villages of the Union.

Apricots.....	700,000 pounds
Sultanas.....	200,000 "
Raisins.....	200,000 "
Prunes.....	1,600,000 "
Apples.....	70,000 "
Peaches.....	700,000 "
Pears.....	150,000 "

Due to the short crop of prunes during the past season this fruit is being imported into South Africa this year. A considerable part of this supply has consisted of California prunes. It is reported that good quality California prunes are retailing at 12 cents per pound after paying a duty of 6 cents per pound. Apricot growers are said to be cutting production costs by lowering wages paid for labor. Growers formerly paid 12 cents per tray for cutting apricots for drying. This expense has now been reduced to 8 cents per tray. A uniform price of six cents per tray for the coming season is now being considered.

Reports indicate that dried fruit from South Africa has been enjoying notable popularity in London this year. The losses expected because of the lower exchange value of the pound sterling were offset by increases in the London quotations for South African fruit.

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FOREIGN NEWS ON FRUIT

November 27, 1931



DECIDUOUS FRUIT CROP PROSPECTS IN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

A record crop of deciduous fruit is expected in South Africa next season, according to a report dated October 14 from Agricultural Attache C. C. Taylor at Pretoria. There has been some frost in the Transvaal, which injured the peaches and destroyed the plums, but the apple buds were still dormant and were not hurt. Apricots, peaches, and grapes were well advanced around Pretoria, where the season is about two weeks ahead of the main producing area, but this section is not important commercially. In Cape Colony, pear trees at Ceres, the principal pear-producing area, were reported to be in full bloom the first week in October, with appearances pointing to a large pear crop. Prunes have set a heavy crop of fruit at Tulbach, but the season during which the fruit is apt to drop had not passed when the report was made. Apricots in that section were somewhat damaged by cold. Cape Town was visited in October by a severe gale, which blew a great deal of green fruit from the trees, but the rain accompanying the wind was probably beneficial, and no serious complaints of excessive wind damage were received. It is judged from the low temperatures prevailing in the Orange Free State that some damage to peaches was general over that state, but no report of this has been made.

Although many misfortunes may yet befall the South African crop, it appears now that, with average weather conditions, and assuming foreign exchange rates were normal, there would be around 50,000 shipping tons of 40 cubic feet (2,700,000 boxes) exported this coming year as compared with 31,724½ tons (1,897,296 boxes) last year. This estimate is much larger than an earlier one which placed the increase at 13 to 20 per cent over last year's exports, present calculations indicating a 50 per cent increase. The expected increase in each class of fruit is shown in the following table.

SOUTH AFRICA: Estimated exports of deciduous fruit for 1931-32, compared with 1930-31, with approximate increases, in tons of 40 cubic feet

Fruit	1930-31	1931-32	Approximate increase
	Tons	Tons	Tons
Grapes.....	13,085	14,000	1,000
Pears.....	5,878	17,000 - 20,000	11,000 - 14,000
Plums.....	5,566	6,000 - 8,000	500 - 2,500
Peaches.....	4,192	5,500	1,500
Nectarines.....	480	600	100
Apricots.....	93	100	-
Apples.....	1,550	2,500	1,000
Miscellaneous.....	880½	900	-
Total.....	31,724½	46,600 - 51,600	15,100 - 20,100

It is possible that the new exchange rates may materially affect the above estimate. Furthermore, England may impose a tariff on luxury products including fresh fruits. Exports would be reduced under these conditions. On the other hand, if the proposed English tariff should give preference to South African fruit, the export movement from this country would be stimulated instead of retarded. At present, fruit growers are greatly alarmed over the prospect of having to incur a loss of 20 per cent in transferring funds from England to South Africa. This can be partially offset by the deduction of ocean freight and overseas selling charges, which may be paid in English money, and by leaving a portion of the returns in England to be spent for packing materials and orchard supplies. But the loss is still considerable, and it is not expected that prices in England will rise quickly enough to avoid such loss. It is possible that some exportable fresh fruit may be diverted from shipments to drying plants or wineries in a last hope of realizing some profit on these products in case conditions do not improve.

Much interest is shown in the political and economic crisis in England, and, although South Africa has kept the gold standard, great pressure is being brought to bear on the Government to abandon it. This effort is resisted by the gold mining interests, but the voting strength of the country rests with the farmers and fruit growers.

#### Seasonal movement of exports

It is estimated by the Perishable Products Export Control Board that the first important shipment of deciduous fruit from South Africa will leave Cape Town on December 3 and that the export season will close on May 27. The peak will probably be between February 11 and March 18, when the weekly movement is expected to approximate 3,600 shipping tons. In view of the difficulties in England, it is expected that a larger quantity than usual of deciduous fruit will go to Canada and Continental Europe. This is particularly true in the case of Canada, since recent trade arrangements have been completed whereby direct boat service will be available from South Africa not only on mail boats alone, but on others as well. All the mail boats of the Union Castle Line, which carry about 90 per cent of the South African deciduous exports, have been equipped with a new type of refrigeration which is said to provide an even temperature throughout the cargo and reduce deterioration of fruit to a minimum. Agents have also been appointed in Canada to represent the interests of South African exporters.

#### Trend of exports

The export business of deciduous fruit from South Africa has grown steadily during the past years as shown in the following table, with the estimate for the coming season exceeding total exports for any previous year.

SOUTH AFRICA: Exports of deciduous fruits a/, five-year averages,  
1898-99 to 1922-23, annual 1923-24 to 1931-32

Season	Exports	
	Packages	Volume
	Number	Tons of 40 cubic feet
Average 1898-99 to 1902-03...	16,476	236
Average 1903-04 to 1907-08...	74,740	1,068
Average 1908-09 to 1912-13...	197,845	2,821
Average 1913-14 to 1916-17...	197,570	2,823
Average 1918-19 to 1922-23...	514,085	7,344
1923-24.....	1,001,132	14,445
1924-25.....	1,526,264	21,804
1925-26.....	1,547,643	22,109
1926-27.....	1,536,610	21,947
1927-28.....	1,951,056	28,009
1928-29.....	1,543,193	23,312
1929-30.....	2,503,283	39,297
1930-31.....	1,897,296	31,724
1931-32 <u>b/</u> .....	2,700,000	49,000

a/ Pineapple excluded. b/ Preliminary estimate.

Delayed foliation

During the past year many difficulties were experienced by fruit growers in South Africa on account of delayed foliation. In certain years it has been noticed that peach blossoms shed in August to September, the usual time, but the trees do not begin to leaf until late November and only a few fruits mature, which are of little value. This condition has been investigated in the Somerset West, and it has been found that a humidity of 85 to 90 per cent is normal during the winter and the mean temperature is about 52 degrees. As spring approaches, humidity is down to an average of 60 per cent while the temperature is up to 70 or 75 degrees. It is during this period of falling humidity and rising temperature that the fruit grows, but in about two years out of five a kind of false spring occurs, when humidity falls and temperature rises too soon, starting the growth of buds which are arrested or killed in the following cold weather. This interference with the normal rest period of the trees prevents them from making any new growth after December or January. A normal growth of about 90 days has been found necessary to produce good fruit, and when delayed foliation occurs only about 50 days elapse between blooming and harvest. This causes fruit to have small pits, or no pits at all, and the quality is not good enough for shipping purposes. Growers are being urged to consider sites very carefully before expending money for new orchards so as to avoid localities where delayed foliation is likely to occur.



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December 24, 1931

FOREIGN NEWS ON FRUIT

ARGENTINE GRAPES CONTRACTED FOR SHIPMENT TO THE UNITED STATES

Contracts are reported for the sale of an additional consignment of 45,000 cases of Almeria grapes for shipment to the United States during the coming season at 29 centavos Argentine national currency per kilogram (about 3.38 cents United States currency per pound at the current rate of exchange), according to a communication from Assistant Agricultural Commissioner Charles L. Luedtke at Buenos Aires, quoting the Sociedad Fruticola of San Juan. The total contract sales of grapes for shipment to the United States so far this season aggregate 85,000 cases. A previous lot of 40,000 cases was sold at 25 centavos Argentine national currency per kilogram (about 2.91 cents United States currency per pound). Argentine grapes are packed in cases of 10 kilograms (22 pounds). The railway freight rate on grapes from San Juan to Buenos Aires is 6 centavos Argentine national currency per kilogram, gross weight, or about seven tenths (.7) cents United States currency per pound. The rate from Mendoza is 5 centavos per kilo (.58 cents United States currency per pound). The ocean freight from Buenos Aires to New York is 50 cents United States currency per box, which would be equivalent to approximately 2.27 cents per pound.

The shipping season of table grapes for export begins around the end of January or beginning of February. The total shipments of Argentine grapes to the United States during the last season (January - May, 1931) amounted to 187,433 cubic feet, with a declared valuation of \$824,363.00 United States currency, according to the consular invoice records of the American Consulate General in Buenos Aires.

The Province of San Juan is the principal area for the production of table grapes. Approximately 75 per cent of the total production of the Republic is in this Province. The remaining 25 per cent comes from the Province of Mendoza, which is the principal wine-grape area of the Argentine.

The heavy frosts which hit the fruit area in these two provinces early last month are expected to reduce the yield of table grapes in the Province of San Juan approximately 20 per cent, while the estimated reduction in the Province of Mendoza is placed at 80 per cent. Shipments to the United States during the coming season are not, therefore, expected to reach the same volume as those of last season.

